

(WASHINGTON, DC) – U.S. Representative Chet Edwards announced that he has secured funding at the request of the city of Waco for a program that will help clean up the North Bosque River and Lake Waco under the 2011 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, which passed its subcommittee July 15th.

Edwards, vice chair of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee said, *“Improving water quality at Lake Waco is important for quality of life and economic development in Central Texas. This new construction project is an important step toward implementing a comprehensive plan to reduce pollution in the North Bosque River, which will improve Lake Waco water quality for McLennan County families.”*

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Specifically, Edwards secured \$1 million for the new program that will partner the Army Corps of Engineers, USDA, and Natural Resources Conservation Services with private landowners to construct earthen terracing, lagoons, wetlands, and structures throughout the Bosque River Watershed to reduce runoff and improve the water quality of downstream Lake Waco. These funds would be used to develop conservation plans for participating landowners; provide for monitoring and modeling of watershed to determine the effectiveness of the demonstration projects; and publish an annual report to stakeholders. This project’s aim is improve Lake Waco water quality to mitigate runoff into the Bosque River which flows into Lake Waco. This project was begun last year by Edwards with a \$100,000 appropriation.

Waco City Manager Larry Groth said, *“The timing of this funding could not be better. As we work together with TCEQ to meet the water challenges in Central Texas, it is most important that we improve the water quality in Lake Waco. We have always depended on Congressman Edwards’ leadership in the area of water quality and this funding is critical to that effort.”*

Now that studies are complete and initial funds secured by Edwards last year to start construction are in place, Edwards says it’s time to grow the program for the future.

“Now that we have been successful in securing the seed money to begin construction, we have a solid foundation on which to build and expand our efforts to protect the Bosque River watershed for years to come,” **concluded Edwards, the only Texan on the House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee.** □

Lake Waco not only serves as the primary source of drinking water for the City of Waco, but is also a key recreational area for McLennan County residents. The 2011 Energy and Water bill must still pass the House, Senate, and be signed into law.

